

San Diego DX Club Bulletin

October 2016



OCTOBER PROGRAM

MOON BOUNCE

BY PAUL CHOMINSKI, WA6PY

MEETING NOTICE:

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2016

JOIN US AT THE SIZZLER, 3755 Murphy Canyon Road,

San Diego, CA 92123 (858) 278-6988

SOCIAL HOUR, 5:00 P.M. DINNER, 5:30 P.M.

MEETING, 6:30 P.M

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From the Prez . . .

Howard, W6HDG

DX Clusters Part 2

Last month I reviewed the basics of DX Clusters. After the article appeared I received several questions about which specific cluster I use and recommend. Last month I might have suggested HB9DRV-9 but recently I have become aware of considerable improvements to the WA9PIE-2 Global DX Spotting Network. I've been using it over the past couple of weeks as my sole node and I'm absolutely hooked.

The network was started in 2014 by Dr. Mike Carper WA9PIE who is a co-owner of HRD and the CIO of a major retailer whose name you would quickly recognize. Mike is an avid DX'er and I've bumped up against him in several pileups. In developing his network, Mike did his research and gathered the raw data from all the user-generated spots in the world. He then dropped the data into Excel. Creating pivot tables in Excel, he found out which other nodes in the world were the source of the most user-generated spots. He then linked WA9PIE-2 to those.

The WA9PIE-2 Global DX Spotting Network is the best of all possible worlds – it is directly connected to 20 of the hottest cluster nodes from around the world. Because WA9PIE-2 is directly connected to these nodes, you don't have to. So virtually every user generated spot in the world flows through WA9PIE-2!

- 6 nodes in NA (including VE7CC-1)
- 8 nodes in EU (including HB9DRV-9 and GB7MBC)
- 2 nodes in AS
- 1 node in SA
- 2 nodes in OC

The site is now hosted in a far more modern way than other networks. While most folks (including VE7CC) have their cluster nodes hosted on a computer in their house, WA9PIE-2 has recently moved to a Google Cloud data center. Because of this, WA9PIE-2 has high-availability and fast Internet speeds globally. Have you ever posted a spot to another cluster and waited for quite a while for your spot to show up? My spot reports are now nearly instantaneous. Further, WA9PIE-2 is routinely backed up and can be restored within minutes in the unlikely event of a failure of Google's data center.



WA9PIE-2 has also resolved an issue I had with HB9DRV-9 and others. I NO LONGER HAVE DROPPED CONNECTIONS (nodes like HB9DRV-9 drop all connections at least once per day between 0100Z and 0315Z, which is in the evening here in the USA when we're all actively chasing DX).

As far as accuracy, how many times has a new DXpedition shown up on your cluster with the wrong country listed? Remember K1N? I had to monkey with my exception list to get Navassa to appear. This problem will finally be all but eliminated with WA9PIE-2. As you may know, the de facto country list is maintained by Jim, AD1C. His country list can be imported into DX cluster nodes of all kinds and some logging programs but his updates are not on a regular basis. It is in this list that the DX cluster node is able to know whether K1N is Navassa... or a special event station in Boston. So what WA9PIE-2 has done is to automate the process of updating the AD1C data by forcing a check at 0800Z to update the data if a newer version exists. WA9PIE-2 also checks Kepler data and the USDB (the FCC database) since those are published on a predictable weekly schedule.

"Show" queries, the queries that you can do directly on the cluster (as described in my article last month) are all available on WA9PIE-2 including HFSTATS, QSL Manager database, DXSTATS, Solar Weather, etc.

WA9PIE-2 doesn't filter spots in/out. It's a world-wide spotting network. This enables you to use the cluster's highly configurable filters so that you can eliminate spots that originate from outside your area if you wish. But I rarely filter since I enjoy seeing worldwide spots. I can't tell you how many times I've clicked on a spot I shouldn't be able to work, and have!

No registration is currently required for WA9PIE-2 and it is totally FREE. You do not need to be a registered customer of Ham Radio Deluxe and it can be configured on most other software packages.

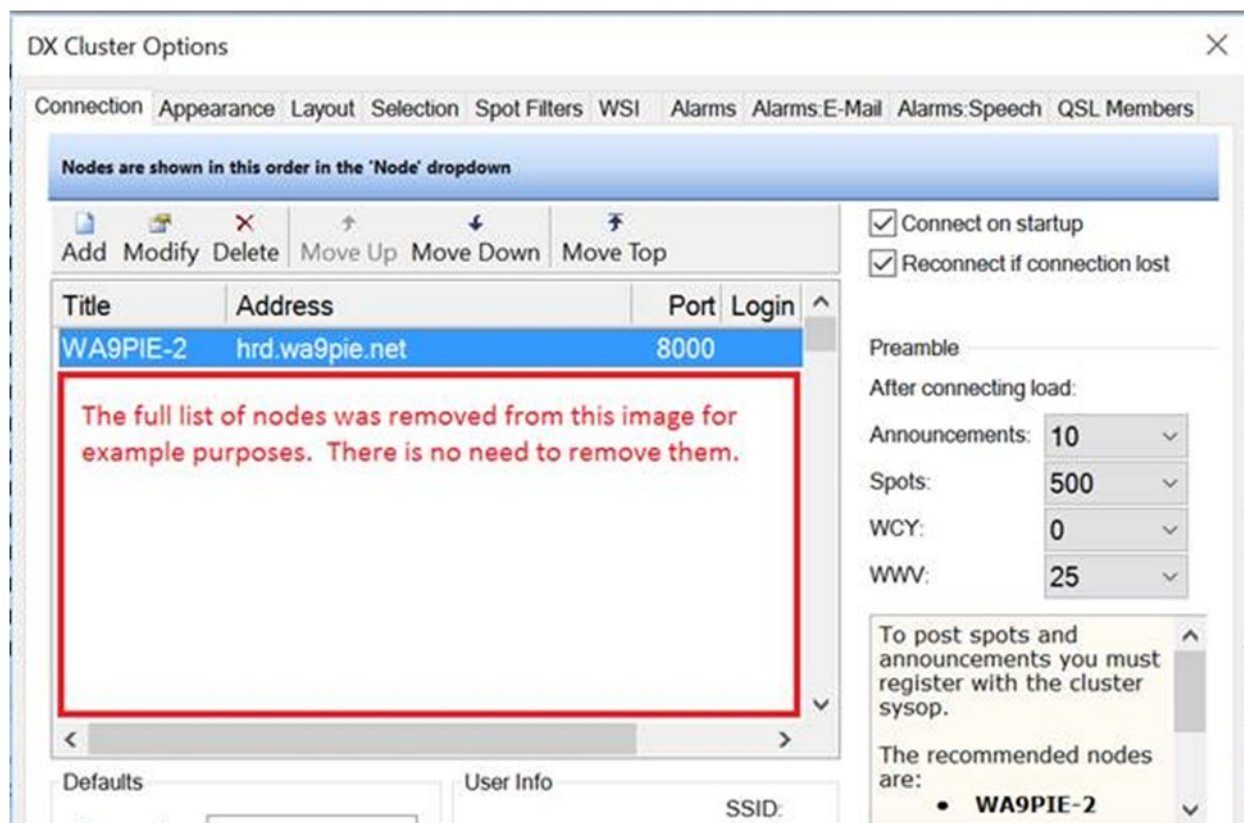
How to set up your software for WA9PIE-2:

Simply enter WA9PIE-2 using the address hrd.wa9pie.net and port 8000

Although you don't need to be using Ham Radio Deluxe as your software, here is how HRD users would add WA9PIE-2. Click on "Options" in the DX Cluster pane... then in the "Connection" tab, click "Add", then enter the following:

Click "Ok" to save.

The WA9PIE-2 entry should be at the top of your list as shown below.



You can then “Close” your current connection by clicking the “Close” button...then change your node connection to “WA9PIE-2”, and then click “Connect”. From this point, your future connections will be directed to the WA9PIE-2 Global DX Spotting Network.

For more info you can go to: <http://www.wa9pie.net/dxing/wa9pie-2-dx-cluster>.

Howard, **W6HDG**

A User Comments on WA9PIE-2 Cluster

After reading Howard’s excellent report in this issue of the SDDXC Bulletin, I decided to try it out for myself. Moving from VE7CC-1 to WA9PIE-2 was easy and accomplished by simply changing the Cluster Telnet callsign in the VE7CC Cluster software. Worked immediately. Now I am able to see spots from all over the world.

But I found one thing I wasn’t expecting. When connecting to VE7CC-1, I filter out spots with US calls in the DX field because I can send the SET command to a Cluster. If you are interested in NPOTA (see my article starting on Page 9), this can be a big plus. To me the most important function of the cluster is to alert me to IOTA (and now NPOTA) spots based on announced operations. That function works like a charm. I’ll keep my experiment with WA9PIE-2 running a bit longer.

I suggest trying it out for yourself and drawing your own conclusions.

Bob, **K9RHY**



VP Report

Mike, NA6MB

Heard Island DXpedition - Dr. Bob Schmieder KK6EK



Bob presented an outstanding program about the Cordell Expeditions trip to Heard Island in April 2016.

He had some great pictures from the trip and discussed the mammals (only seals), birds and plants on the island as well as the unique geography. Heard Island is an active volcano. He talked about the location selected and why they never made it to the north side of the island as planned. The north side would give a better path to North America, but the sea was too rough, water too shallow and there was no suitable location to make it possible. Unfortunately, this made contact with USA and the west coast very hard – at least for me, as I did work

them.

One ham who did hear and work them was our own Jim Price, K6ZH. This was Jim's last country for his DXCC #1 honor roll plaque! Jim was happy to meet the man (Jim and Bob pictured above) who made that possible. Well done Jim! Thanks Bob.



Up next for the 10/26 - Moon Bounce by Paul Chominski, WA6PY



Paul received novice license SP5CIC (80 and 40 m 15W CW only) in 1967. He soon became interested in EME and, with his brother Mike, SP5CJT, built a 4 x 5.5 m long yagi array for 144 MHz. One week later the antenna was totally destroyed in a storm. As his brother Mike went to the military and Paul concentrated on finishing his university study, Paul built equipment for 432 MHz. In 1976 he assembled a stress dish, but realized it was too large for the roof of

the house. He then moved to SM0 and started from scratch, but was soon on HF and 144 MHz EME and then 1296 and 432. After a few years he became SM0PYP and added 2304 MHz. He moved to San Diego in April 1996 and started fresh again with 10 GHz EME and a single yagi for 144 from a rented house. When he bought a house in RB, he slowly built more antennas and is currently on 1.8MHz to 10 GHz with DXCC on several bands.

December 18, 2016 - Holiday Party

The December meeting is the annual Holiday Party and will again be held at the Fiddler's Green on Shelter Island. Address is: 2760 Shelter Island Drive, San Diego, CA 92106

The time has been changed to 12:00 PM to 4:30 PM to accommodate a new Sunday breakfast they have added. I am working on the menu choices, but I hope it will be similar to last year with several excellent choices.

Secretary/Treasurer Reports

Randy, KQ6RS



Meeting Minutes, SDDXC Club, September 28, 2016

At 6:30 pm the meeting was called to order. 30 members and one guest, Darlynn Barrie (XYL of Bob Barrie K1ROA) were in attendance. Darlynn is interested in obtaining her ticket.

We voted on and approved five new members. They were: Michael Gottlieb KB6D, Gary Kent W6GDK, Massimo Marras IZ5KID, Pete Villaver N6RVI, and Ron Earl W6TXK.

Old business – the August meeting minutes and Treasurer's report were approved.

New business – the holiday party will be held on December 18th from 12:00-4:00 pm at Fiddlers Green on Shelter Island where the party has been held the past two years.

On November 6th there will be an operating day at Fry's (9825 Stonecrest Blvd, San Diego, CA 92123) from 7:00 am (public operations by 9:00 am) to 4:00 pm.

From 6:38 to 6:56 we had our roundtable discussions.

At 7:10 Dr. Bob Schmieder gave a presentation on the 2016 Heard Island DXpedition, VK0EK.

At 8:30 the meeting was adjourned.

Treasurer's Report

Income for September \$20.00 (memberships)

Expenses for September \$46.87 (Web hosting for 2017, September speaker's dinner)

Statement Balance on 9/30/2016 \$8,219.83

Randy, KQ6RS

SDDXC TOP 10 (EXPANDED VERSION)

CURRENT COUNTRIES CONFIRMED ON PHONE

10/16	10/15	CALL	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG	10/16	10/15	CALL	C-D	CFM	WKD	CHG
1.	10.	W6YA	339	371	371	+7	11.	9.	WA6MHZ	334	335	345	-1
2.	1.	W6YI	339	359	359	-1	12.	12.	K5OA	333	352	352	+7
3.	2.	N6CW	339	349	349	-1	13.	11.	K6ZH	327	343	344	-1
4.	3.	K6AM	339	349	349	-1	14.	13.	K0XB	325	333	335	-1
5.	-.	WB1EAZ	339	330	330	NEW	15.	15.	WN6K	320	330	339	+2
6.	4.	K9RHY	338	350	350	-1	16.	14.	N6XT	318	325	333	-1
7.	6.	W6YOO	338	348	348	-	17.	16.	N6VS	310	315	319	-1
8.	5.	K6GAK	337	365	365	-1	18.	17.	WB6BFG	301	304	309	-
9.	8.	N0RR	336	358	358	-	19.	-.	N6JOJ	297	299	304	NEW
10.	7.	NN6K	336	339	339	-1	20.	20.	NA6L	297	298	303	+13

We're lookin' at the top 20 in this category to accommodate the larger number of entries. Jim, W6YA finally gets around to counting his phone totals after many years to become our new phone leader. New member, WB1EAZ turns in a fine showing to land him in fifth place right out of the gate, while K5OA comes out of a long slumber to get him back up where he belongs. Several guys in the right column are making good progress with Tom, N6JOJ finally making the list after all these years. There's still plenty of room for more shakeup in the second ten, so you guys get out there and have some fun.

Each month, we will publish a top ten list for one of the lesser recognized but hard won categories. Coming up next, CW, 10/40M and 80/20M. Please send me your totals for each band throughout the year and you will be listed in coming months. Use the convenient form at <http://www.sddxc.org> or bring 'em to the meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: Kingman reef, KH5K is no longer a current entity effective March 29. Make sure all future reports reflect its move from current to deleted status. If your latest report was before that date, I will assume you have KH5K worked and have automatically reduced all your C-D totals by one as of this report.

CHECK YOUR LOGS

It's time once again to recognize those of you who have made outstanding DX achievements during the year. Please check your logs and let me know if you worked your 330th current country or more than 20 all time new countries during 2016.

John, K6AM

SDDXC RESULTS 2016 ARRL DX CW CONTEST

CLASS	CALL	SCORE	QSO'S	MLTS	Finish
MS HP	ZF1A (ops K6AM, N6MJ)	7,112,070	6,715	355	#2 World
SO LP	WN6K	426,624	840	176	#1 SW Div, #1 W6
SO HP	K6NA	156,894	334	158	#1 SDG , #7 SW Div
SA LP	W6JBR	37,485	149	85	#2 SDG, #7 SW Div
SO 15	W6YA	354,816	1,061	112	#1 W6, #2 SW div, #5 US/VE
SO 20	N7CW	119,508	439	92	#1 W7, #1 SW div, #5 US/VE
SO 15	N6MUF	4,050	56	25	#7 SW div

The Last One by Jim Price, K6ZH

I've been a ham since I was a kid (novice in 1963), but I didn't get started chasing DX much until the 1970s, and not seriously until the 2000s. I could see that working them all was a possibility as I have a reasonably good station (2 elements on 40, a 4-element SteppIR, and 30 meter rotary dipole, all at 60 feet). By 2013, I had worked 'em all, EXCEPT for one - Heard Island. So I kept saying to my fellow DXers, "I have to live at least long enough to work the last one!"

At first the Heard operation was going to be in 2014, then in 2015, and finally, there they were, on their way to Heard in March 2016. Early in the morning (CA time) on March 24th, I worked VK0EK on 30 meter CW in just a couple of calls. Woo Hoo - there it is! And when I saw my call come up on their web page I was like - WOW! I then had a trip away from home for a few days. When I returned, I managed 3 more QSOs: 40 CW on April 1, 20 CW on April 8, and 40 SSB on April 9 - the last day. The 30 meter QSO was quick with fairly loud signals. The others were a couple of S-units above ESP!

So, thanks Bob KK6EK and the multitude of others!! I have the #1 Honor Roll plaque on the wall, I enjoy my morning tea in a VK0EK coffee mug, and I have the satisfaction of finishing the longest project of my life!

73 (very) - Jim, K6ZH

From the Editor

Bob, K9RHY



SDDXC Club Members NA6L, K6ZH and N6KIM Activate Cabrillo National Monument (NPOTA MN09)

Many thanks to Jim, K6ZH for inspiring this note.

Throughout 2016, Amateur Radio will be helping the National Park Service celebrate their 100th anniversary. Hams from across the country will activate National Parks, promote the National Park Service and showcase Amateur Radio to the public. These activations form the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) 2016 event.

For us DXers, reduced sunspot activity coupled with the lack of quality DX and our need to chase *something* on the air has driven many of us to other radio passions. Jim, K6ZH and Joan, N6KIM activated NPOTA MN09 (an NPOTA “unit designator”), Cabrillo National Monument and got a taste of pileups from the other side. Just a few months ago the NPOTA program had about 6,000 chasers and now there are nearly 12,000 so the activity is really growing.

John, NA6L has been a frequent “activator” for the National Parks on the Air program this year. So far he has been on from several states and at least a couple of dozen locations.

John was willing to share a seat in his car for Jim and Joan to activate Cabrillo National Monument (MN09) a few weeks ago. Joan was on SSB with her call, and Jim was on CW with his own call. They operated casually and without excitement on 20 meters. But then they were spotted and the band got much more excited. Joan worked over 30 stations and Jim worked over 20.

It helped that John had a nice setup – full-sized 20 meter telescoping vertical on top of the car, and all the necessary equipment strapped into the Prius.

NPOTA activities run through the end of the year. If you are not familiar with NPOTA, the scale of the program is staggering.

As I write this, there are more than 50 activations scheduled within the next 10 days, so there is no shortage of “units” to chase. If you have the urge to activate a National Park, there are 36 “counters” in California alone.

The ARRL is fully and firmly behind these activations and events. Indeed, the ARRL supports and sponsors NPOTA activity through an extensive web mini-site at <https://npota.arrl.org/>. Based on LOTW, the NPOTA web site features and includes these functions:

Leader Board – To see who has the most activator and chaser confirmed contacts.

If you are logged in using your LoTW log in credentials, your position will be the first record on the activator and chaser leader boards. If you're logged in and your call sign does not appear at the top of a leader board, you do not have any confirmed records of this type. The results are updated daily based on QSOs entered into Logbook of the World.

- **Honor Roll** – To see who is on the honor roll.

If you're logged in using your LoTW log in credentials, your call sign will be at the top of the honor roll leader board. If you're logged in and your call sign does not appear at the top of the leader board, you have not made the honor roll. The results are updated daily based on QSOs entered into Logbook of the World.

- **On the Air** – To view registered activations within the next ten (10) days. A list of all upcoming listed activations is also available.
- **NPS Lookup** – To enter an on the air code to view details about the corresponding National Park Service Unit.
- **NPS Units** – To view a list of all National Park Service units, on the air codes, locations and sensitivity warnings. Links to individual units on the National Park Service website are also included.

NPOTA fans can log in using their Logbook of the World user name and password to access these additional tabs:

- **Units Worked** – To see how many units you've worked as a chaser and as an activator.
- **Register an Activation** – To complete the form to register your upcoming activation. Your activation will appear on the [On the Air](#) page. You can also edit or delete a previously registered upcoming activation on this page.
- **Award Application** – To order certificate(s) for your National Parks on the Air achievements. Activator and Chaser certificates can be ordered anytime you have confirmed contacts after January 1, 2016 00:00 UTC. Honor Roll certificates will be available after the log upload deadline of January 31, 2017 23:59 UTC and when all points totals have been finalized by ARRL.

When I drove to the W4DXCC event in Sevierville, TN, from my home QTH in Knoxville, I passed through three National Parks in less than an hour: the [Blue Ridge Parkway](#), The [Appalachian National Scenic Trail](#) and the [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#).

Had I been equipped (like Jim, Joan and John) I could have activated

- Blue Ridge Parkway (PK01)
- Appalachian Trail (TR01)
- Great Smoky Mountains Park (NP26)

The NPOTA 20 and 40 meter activity frequencies are 14,286 and 7,286 +/- 6 kHz.

Following are some pictures from the Cabrillo National Monument activation.

